DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 193 713 CS 503 085

AUTHOR Bruneau, Thomas; And Others
TITLE The Interpersonal Needs of Guam College Students as Compared to Those Elsewhere.
PUB DATE Jul 80
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the Annual International Meeting of the Communication Association of the Pacific (Agana, Guam, July 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Students; *Communication Research; Comparative Analysis; Cross Cultural Studies; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Individual Needs; Interpersonal Competence; *Needs Assessment; *Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS *Guam

ABSTRACT

The interpersonal needs of inclusion, affection, and control were explored among a sample of 151 college students in Guam. The students were administered a scale to measure the strength of their interpersonal needs. The results revealed that the students' needs were average or low, most likely typifying a population that, living at home with the family's support, had no overpowering or unmet interpersonal needs. These results were then compared to similar data obtained from students in Australia, China, Hawaii, Japan, and Korea. The comparisons showed that these students also fell into the average or low ranges, suggesting that they are part of a strong relationship, probably with family, which meets their interpersonal needs. Overall, the data supported the conclusion that the students sampled were not lacking in need satisfaction. (FL)

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THE INTERPERSONAL NEEDS OF GUAM COLLEGE STUDENTS AS COMPARED TO THOSE ELSEWHERE

Thomas Bruneau, Ronald Cambra, Donald Klopf*

[Prepared for the 1980 international convention of the Communication Association of the Pacific, Agana, Guam.]

To help understand the "why" and "how" of cross-cultural communication, Harms (1973) argues, one should understand the extent of interpersonal need satisfaction in the different cultures. Interpersonal needs are those that can be satisfied only through relationships with other people.

Schutz (1967) contends that every person has three interpersonal needs--inclusion, control and affection. Inclusion is the need to establish and maintain satisfying interactions and associations. Control is the need to establish and maintain satisfying relationships related to control and power. Affection is the need for close, personal relationships with others.

In order to satisfy these needs, Scott and Powers (1978) believe, people must communicate, not only to satisfy the communicator's needs but to satisfy the needs of the others in the communication situations as well. Talking to someone is as vital to a person's psychological well-being as eating and drinking are to a person's physical well-being. Thus, the ability to recognize the needs people experience becomes a factor in explaining human behavior.

The purpose here is to explore the strength of those needs among college students in Guam and, for comparison reasons, to match them against student groups from Australia, China, Hawaii, Japan and Korea.

Method

The students who participated were 151 Guamanians from the University of Guam; 504 Japanese from Otsuma Women's, Nihon, Waseda and Yokohama City universities; 117 Chinese from the Peking Institute of Foreign Language; 397 Americans from the University of Hawaii; 219 Australians from Armidale College of Advanced Education; and 73 Koreans from Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. The six groups were divided almost equally among males and females in an age range of 18 to 24 years (mean: 20 years).

The Schutz (1976) scale to measure interpersonal needs, the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation--Behavior (FIRO-B), was administered to the students. Six scores are derived from the FIRO-B: expressed inclusion, control and affection needs and wanted inclusion, control and affection needs.

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*Bruneau is Director, Center for Advancing Intercultural Communication, University of Guam, Cambra is Assistant Professor and Klopf, Professor, University of Hawaii. Our thanks to data collectors William Crocker, Jason Alter, Satoshi Ishii and Myung Seok Park.

The scale's expressed dimension indicates the behavior a person expresses toward others; the wanted dimension, the behavior the person wants expressed toward him. A score between 7 to 9 indicates the need is strong; between 4 - 6, an average need; and between 0 - 3 a low need (Schutz 1967).

In China, Japan and Korea, the respondents were English-trained and responded to the English version of the FIRO-B. English-speaking faculty collaborated on the data collection in those countries. To analyze the data, Tuccy's T-test Procedure (1975) was used since is was designed for independent samples of unequal size.

Results

Table I contains the results of the comparisons, giving the means and standard deviations for each group on the six FIRO-B scales as well as the significant t test calculations. The following conclusions can be drawn from the table.

INCLUSION. In terms of expressed inclusion ("I tend to join social organizations, participate in group activities, and avoid being alone."), the Guam students' need is significantly less strong that the Australians, significantly stronger than the Chinese and Japanese, and at the same strength as the Hawaiians and Koreans. On the wanted inclusion need ("I want people to invite me to things."), the Guamanians are significantly less needy than the Australians, and Hawaiians, significantly more than the Japanese, and similar to the Chinese and Koreans.

AFFECTION. The Guam students perceive themselves as significantly less needy than the Chinese and Japanese on the expressed affection need ("I try to have close, personal relations with people.") and the same as the Australians, Hawaiians and Koreans. On the wanted affection need ("I want people to get close to me."), they are the same as the Japanese but significantly less needy than all of the other groups.

CONTROL. With regard to expressed control ("I try to take charge of things when I'm with people."), the Koreans were significantly stronger than the Guamanians while the Australians, Hawaiians and Japanese were significantly weaker. There was no significant difference between the Guam and Chinese students. The wanted control need ("I want other people to decide what to do, influence my actions, take charge.") again showed the Australians with a significantly lower need and the Japanese with a significantly higher need than the Guam group, and no significant difference between Guam and the others.

The mean scores suggest the strength of each need. In no case do the scores fall in the range indicating a high need, that is, a range of 7 to 9. Rather, they fall into the average (4 to 6) or low (0 to 3) ranges. Quite likely the needs of the students in all of the groups are being satisfied for the most part. Many live at home, obtaining need satisfaction from family and friends.

Table I

FIRO-B Comparisons of College Students in Guam to Those in Australia, China, Hawaii, Japan and Korea

College Groups	Inclusion		Affection		Control	
	Expressed	Wanted	Expressed	Wanted	Expressed	Wanted
Guam Compared						
Mean	4.29	3.11	4.11	4.37	2.92	3.68
Standard Deviation	2.05	3.26	2.55	2.67	2.24	2.58
To Australia						
Mean	5.06	5.13	4.53	5.33	1.80	2.91
Standard Deviation	2.10	3.27	2.58	2.55	2.08	2.22
t Comparison	3.39*	5.71*	N.S.	3.40*	4.79*	2.99*
To China						
Mean	3.62	3.03	4.80	5.89	2.48	3.40
Standard Deviation	1.87	3.15	2.66	2.93	2.27	2.22
t Comparison	2.78*	N.S.	2.16***	4.43*	N.S.	N.S.
To Hawaii						
Mean	4.60	4.77	4.45	5.39	2.11	3.79
Standard Deviation	2.20	3.40	2.71	2.74	2.14	2.49
t Comparison	N.S.	5.17*	N.S.	3.91*	3.90*	N.S.
To Japan						
Mean	3.90	1.61	4.84	4.36	1.83	4.09
Standard Deviation	1.90	2.58	2.53	2.23	1.90	2.16
t Comparision	2.15***	5.87*	3.08***	N.S.	5.96*	1.96***
To Korea						
Mean	3.79	2.82	4.81	5.21	4.61	3.67
Standard Deviation	1.94	2.69	2.48	2.53	2.40	1.82
t Comparison	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	2.05***	4.77*	N.S.

*p < .001 **p < .01 ***p < .05

Discussion

Before interpreting the findings, a caution is in order about the study's methodological problems. There are several problems which could taint the results. One problem stems from the fact that the students responded to the English language version of the FIRO-B. This version may not be linguistically and conceptually equivalent for all groups. An unknown portion of the findings could be attributed to variations in meaning the test may carry for each group. Should all of the students uniformly have understood each item, this high level of English competence could set them apart from their less competent countrymen.

Other problems range from the comparing peoples with different homogeneous backgrounds to the disparity in the group's sizes. Therefore, the generalizations which follow should be viewed as at best tentative.

While the Guam and Hawaii students represent the American culture for the most part, there are differences in their needs, the Hawaiians having stronger wanted inclusion, wanted affection and expressed control needs. The differences perhaps can be traced to the ethnic constituency of the two groups. The Guam group consists of a mixture of Chamorro, Chinese, Filipino, Palauan, Caucasian, Trukian, and Koreans while the Hawaii group is largely of Japanese stock along with smaller numbers of Caucasians, Chineses, and Filipinos, among others. However, the need strength of both groups is almost identical.

The Australians have stronger expressed inclusion and wanted inclusion and affection needs than the Guam students but weaker control needs. It is believed that a cause for the Australians stronger inclusion and affection needs and weaker control needs is the geographical isolation (Fischer, 1976). Thousands of miles away from the centers of world power, Australians apparently feel cut off and this feeling may manifest itself in the need to join groups, to be a part of group activities, and to be controlled by group life. The Guamanians, on the other hand, are near the hub of Pacific activity with Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines and Hawaii only hours away by plane.

The Chinese, compared to the Guam group, have a weaker expressed inclusion need and stronger expressed and wanted affection needs. In the People's Republic of China, every Chinese is involved in one group at least, and usually in several, Rogers (1979) points out. There is the small group of families living in the lane or courtyard, the group present in every small work unit, and the groups representing the larger neighborhood, factory and the commune. These groups rarely change membership because of the restricted social mobility. Hence, these groups become very stable parts of the typical person's life.

The groups foster a collective life and purpose, not a personal life and purpose. The collective good takes precedence over individual goals, Rogers (1979) notes, as expressed in a very common slogan, "Fight Self: Serve the People." Privacy is virtually unheard of for the typical Chinese but then it appears not to be valued. Consequently, the low scores on the inclusion and control needs seem to be in line with the collective nature

of the society. The affection need's strength is average, however, meaning perhaps that this need is not fully satisfied in the close confines of Chinese home life.

The Guam group was significantly different than the Japanese on five needs. Only on the wanted affection was there no significant difference. The differences may be accounted for in much the same manner as the differences with the Chinese. In Japan, the family prepares the child for a life-long membership by teaching the child to be self-less and group-centered, expecting the child to learn the rules and rituals for family life. The Japanese forge strong bonds of loyalty to the family and they rarely join other groups unless they are work or school groups. Thus, the Japanese have relatively few contacts outside of the family and one or two other groups. But intra-group solidarity characterizes membership in these groups, according to Nakane (1970), with considerable in-group interaction, reciprocal obligations and expectations, and fulfillment of interpersonal needs occurring. The Japanese will express and want affection and also want control--they want the group to influence their actions.

The Koreans exhibited weaker inclusion needs than the Guamanians. Like the Japanese, the family plays a strong role in the Korean social structure. But the structure, according to Oliver (1944), has its genesis in the village and its community of families. Village governments operated democratically for the most part and encouraged the oral expression of opinions. As a consequence, the Koreans are apt to be orally aggressive, speaking out when necessary and desiring to control interpersonal transactions (Ishii, Kloof, Cambra, 1978). The findings support this point as the Koreans had a significantly stronger need to express control than the Guamanians.

Summary

This study explored the strengths of the interpersonal needs of inclusion, affection and control among a sample of college students in Guam. Their results reveal that the needs are average or low, typifying most likely a population which, living at home with the family's support, has no overpowering or unmet interpersonal needs.

Because an understanding of the interpersonal needs of a culture tells something about its communication patterns, the Guam study results were compared to similar results obtained from students in Australia, China, Hawaii, Japan and Korea. The comparisons show that these students also fall into the average or low ranges, suggesting they are part of a strong relationship, probably the family, which meets their interpersonal needs. However, significant differences occurred between the groups on the needs, some being stronger for certain groups than for other ones. Nonetheless the data supports the general conclusion that the students sampled in America, Australia, China, Japan and Korea are not lacking in need satisfaction.

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